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ABSTRACT

The attention of Americans and their mass media to the lengthy hostage-taking episode known as the "Iran Hostage Crisis" was unprecedented, especially in light of the apparently limited significance of the hostage-taking as a geo-political event. A study used fantasy-theme analysis of print news coverage (news stories, editorials, letters to the editor, and editorial cartoons) of the events in Iran to identify the motivations of journalists and their audiences in attending to the events and coverage of them. The study found evidence supporting journalists' assertions that they cover events because of their "newsworthiness" to audiences, and supporting the assertion that news has an inherently rhetorical dimension. The study also examined motives of the American public influencing Ronald Reagan's victory over Jimmy Carter in 1980, and how news coverage contributed to this outcome. Finally, the study suggests the dangerous foreign policy environment established when a democratic state's journalists cover foreign news in the fashion they covered the events in Iran. (One hundred seventy-nine notes are included.) (SR)

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The Iran Hostage Crisis

Print Journalism's Role In The Reagan Revolution

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ABSTRACT

The Iran Hostage Crisis:

Print Journalism's Role in the Reagan Revolution

The attention of Americans and their mass media of communication with the lengthy hostage-taking episode known as the "Iran Hostage Crisis" was unprecedented. The attention was especially unprecedented in light of the apparently limited significance of the hostage-taking as a geo-political event. Using fantasy-theme analysis of print news coverage (news stories, editorials, letters to the editor, and editorial cartoons) of the events in Iran, this study identifies the motivations of journalists and their audiences in attending to the events and coverage of them. The study finds evidence supporting journalists' assertions that they cover events because of their "newsworthiness" to their audiences, and supporting the oft-made assertion that news has an inherently rhetorical dimension. The study then examines the motives of the American public influencing Reagan's victory over Carter in 1980, and how news coverage contributed to this outcome. Finally, the study suggests the dangerous foreign policy environment established when a democratic state's journalists cover foreign news in the fashion they covered the events in Iran.

The Iran Hostage Crisis:

Print Journalism's Role In The

Reagan Revolution*

A group of young Islamic revolutionaries seized the American embassy in Tehran, Iran, on November 4, 1979, taking sixty-six Americans hostage and demanding that the United States return Iran's deposed Shah from exile in the U.S. to be tried for crimes against the Islamic revolution. They were motivated by the U.S. admission of the Shah for treatment for the cancer that later claimed his life, and by years of imperialist U.S. tampering in Iran's internal affairs. Iran's revolutionary government under Ayatollah Khomeini proclaimed sympathy for the "students" holding the embassy. Iran was accused of "Blackmailing the U.S.," and the U.S. was "A Helpless Giant in Iran."[1]

Images of blindfolded hostages, frantic Iranian mobs, and American flags burning and being used to haul garbage outraged Americans.[2] The rhetorical potential of the event grew as it spanned a U.S. national election in which an incumbent President was defeated and the balance of power between the major parties changed dramatically. My purpose is to analyze the rhetorical dimensions of American print media coverage of the events in Iran from October 23, 1979 (the date the Shah's U.S. admission was announced), to January 25, 1981 (when the hostages landed in the U.S.). The study involves an analysis of all news reports, editorials, editorial cartoons, and letters to the editor in the *New York Times, Time, Newsweek*, and *Denver Post*.

The study is justified for several reasons. First, studies of political rhetoric usually focus on deliberate persuasion on behalf of candidates, ignoring the news coverage of coincidental events.[3] This study reports on the rhetorical effects of communications designed to report reality--for this is what journalists believe they are doing.[4] And, this study examines news coverage of an important news event that unfolded throughout an American presidential campaign and election that resulted in a rare defeat of a sitting president.

Second, the study is consistent with the widely respected recommendation of the Wingspread Conference that rhetorical scholars must expand the scope of their studies to "examine the full range of rhetorical transactions: that is, informal conversations, group settings, public settings, mass media messages . . . and so forth."[5] Third, the study might provide insights into a number of similar phenomena. For example, the seizure was an example of an entirely mediated event. Very few Americans had any personal knowledge of events in Iran, so perceptions of the event were grounded primarily in media reports. A growing number of such phenomena exist in our media-saturated world. In addition, this study might provide insights into the rhetoric attendant to terrorist events, media manipulation by hostile foreign regimes, news coverage of key events during national elections, etc.

Method

My analysis of print news coverage of the seizure uses Bormann's fantasy-theme method of rhetorical criticism.[6] The method is consistent with the rhetorical school which holds that groups of people rhetorically create their own social realities.[7] These social realities are enacted dramatically as social actors play roles prescribed and performed socially. Communication is a form of social action that reveals social actors' motives.

The rhetorical power of fantasies arises because they "cast there-and-then events in narrative frames and provide a structured, understandable, and meaningful sequence of events." A fantasy theme is a piece of social reality. When fit together to make "sense of the blooming, buzzing confusion" of life, fantasies form "rhetorical visions."[8] Rhetorical visions provide a "total dramatistic explanation of reality," including *character themes*, *setting themes*, and *action themes*. Visions also may contain a *sanctioning agent*--"the source which justifies the acceptance and promulgation of a rhetorical drama."[9]

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* This article is derived from Ralph E. Dowling, "Rhetorical Vision and Print Journalism: Reporting the Iran Hostage Crisis to America," (Ph.D. diss., University of Denver, 1984).

Human motives "arise in the expression itself and come to be embedded in the drama of the fantasy themes that generated and serve to sustain them." In a rhetorical vision, sharers' "motives are thus available for direct interpretation by a community of scholars engaged in rhetorical criticism."[10]

The *power* of the Bormannean dramatistic theory to explain and lead to prediction stems from three attributes. First, the ability of the four major dramatistic concepts to describe elegantly symbolically created rhetorical reality. Second, the theory's direct assumption that *meaning, emotion,* and *motive* are not in the skulls and viscera of people but are in their rhetoric thereby providing a direct link between communication phenomena and behavior. Finally, the identification of basic units of communication--*dramatistic fantasy themes*--that manifest meaning, emotion, and motive.[11]

Bormann's critical method has been described and used in numerous studies. I defer from describing it here.[12] Fantasy-theme analysis involves a cataloguing of recurring character, setting, and action themes and the reconstruction of any rhetorical vision(s) found. Conclusions then are drawn about reasons for the success or failure of the vision(s), the motives of those who share the vision(s), and implications for the study of communication and related areas.

Character Themes

The *dramatis personae* in rhetorical visions are heroes, villains, and supporting players. Character themes "graphically describe their characteristics, assign motives to their actions, portray them doing certain things . . . , and place them in a given setting or scene."[13] The major characters in the Iranian hostage drama were the Ayatollah Khomeini and the militants (villains), and President Carter (the hero). Numerous bit parts are not reported here.

Ayatollah Khomeini

Media accounts depicted Khomeini as old and sick, mentally deficient, morally deficient, spiritually bankrupt, politically opportunistic, and an incompetent national leader. "Experts on Iran" described the Khomeini persona as "arrogant and pious. Stubborn and vengeful. Humorless and inflexible. Ascetic and power hungry." He was also "grandiose, arrogant, and despotic," as well as "shrewd and cunning," but not "particularly intelligent."[14] A Saudi prince called the Khomeini persona "fanatical, vindictive [and] senile."[15]

In early 1989, I am struck by the prevalence and persistence of fantasies that the still-alive Khomeini persona was old, sick, and dying. He was an "ailing zealot of 79," a "mad geriatric case," and an "ailing old leader."[16] Following reports of his heart attack, "the ailing 79-year-old ayatollah" often was said to be "old and sick."[17] The *Denver Post* seemed astonished months later that "Khomeini, now 80, though frail and tired, and having suffered a mild heart attack, lived yet another day."[18]

The ageism of American society was seen in the ease with which the Khomeini persona's age was connected with mental deficiencies. His "addled mind" placed him "out of touch with reality and not intellectually equipped to run Iran."[19]

Apart from age-induced mental deficiencies, the Khomeini persona was "so extreme, so demagogic, so streaked with irrationality" diplomats could not deal with him.[20] He was a "religious fanatic," "medieval religious fanatic," "true maniac," and "lunatic" whose "fundamental view of reality is warped, out of kilter."[21]

The Khomeini persona also showed moral deficiencies. On one occasion he spoke an "outright, knowing lie," and the media went to great lengths to show the lack of truth in his statements.[22] The Khomeini persona also was a hypocrite who enjoyed the protection of international law while exiled in Paris, but who himself was "violating every concept of diplomatic order and international law."[23] The Khomeini persona denounced the Shah's secret police yet created his own, and supported the taking of American hostages in Tehran but called Iranians who seized Iranian diplomats in London "barbarians."[24]

The Khomeini persona also was vindictive and would "risk the fall of his country and the deaths of Iranians to have his personal vengeance on the shah."[25] His "major motivating force" was vengeance, and he conducted "a drive for vengeance."[26] Sadat found him to be "motivated by grudge, hatred and a lust for vengeance," and the *London Telegraph* referred to him as "a stupid, vindictive, and, some would say, vicious old man."[27] The Khomeini persona's cruelty was revealed when he "incited his followers to a callous demonstration of sustained cruelty," and he was known to "flaunt" his "cruelties."[28] Editorial cartoons showed him building a tower called "Iranian Revolution" using mortar from a container labelled

"Hate," and smiling as he ripped an arm off of a cute little doll.[29]

This morally deficient persona could hardly be a spiritual leader. If he ever had been spiritual, he had "become addicted to power and [was] no longer a spiritual person."[30] Sadat said Khomeini placed himself "in the position of God." A reader called Khomeini the "Satanic Saint." Geyer described his "circular black turban" as resembling "a reverse halo from a black Mass." Wright caricatured him as a puppet on the hand of an amused Satan.[31]

The mentally and morally deficient and spiritually bankrupt Khomeini persona was an "opportunist scheming desperately to secure his hold on Iran."[32] Although an opportunist, he was an incompetent leader who did "not understand modern statecraft, diplomacy or administration."[33] The "ayatollah and his fanatics cannot run a modern nation like Iran."[34] The "ruling ayatollahs and mullahs have long since shown their inability to recognize the claims of the real world, let alone deal effectively with its problems."[35] The Khomeini persona was "in danger of losing control of the revolution," because he had "wavered indecisively while the mullahs under-mined the authority of a constitutionally elected President."[36]

President Carter

If Khomeini was the antagonist, President Carter was the protagonist. Unlike the characterizations of Khomeini, there were two visions of the Carter persona. In one vision he was a good leader, restrained, Christian, humanitarian, and concerned for the hostages. In the competing vision Carter was restrained to the point that he was an ineffective leader and political opportunist.

Carter "never expected to be cast in the Churchillian role," but "Khomeini made a president of him, and Soviet tanks in Afghanistan gave him the leadership of the Western world."[37] The Carter persona "acted wisely and well" and began "projecting with considerable success the sense of leadership that he has often seemed to lack."[38] He showed "great competence, steadiness, and assuredness," and deserved "great credit for the right measure of firmness and prudence."[39] The Carter persona's competence depended on the "cold steel" below the surface of his "often bland appearance."[40] He felt a "seething, cold anger," was "in an ice-cold rage," had a "cold, hard look in his eyes" that could "just chill you solid," or, as one observer saw it, he had "fire in his eyes."[41]

Being competent and strong, however, was not consistent with the Carter persona's failure to extricate the hostages. The lack of success was due to his "restraint."[42] He restrained himself from an urge to "do something" in order "to avoid any provocation that might lead to a massacre."[43] Carter's "forbearance" was "extraordinary" and his "restraint" was "conspicuous."[44] He often was praised for "coolness under pressure" and "prudence and restraint."[45]

This restraint stemmed from his Christian and humanitarian nature. The Carter persona "repeatedly turned the other cheek, only to be slapped on it as well."[46] Early in the crisis he went "straight to the National Cathedral, where he attended a prayer service with the families of some of the captives," while at its end, during Reagan's inaugural address Carter closed his eyes and later told aides who asked if he had fallen asleep that "he had been praying."[47]

As time went on, however, a competing vision depicted the Carter persona as an ineffective leader whose restraint "was wrong. . . . His weakness . . . encouraged the most fanatic religious leaders. . . . Mr. Carter gave them everything to gain and nothing to lose."[48] His virtue of restraint had become a vice, and he became the "principle dupe of the Iranian con game," and a letter to the editor blamed the failure of the aborted hostage rescue mission on the danger that exists "when soft-line men feel compelled to take hard-line action."[49] While decrying it as mistaken "perception," *Time* understood that sharers of this fantasy saw "a President who reacts rather than acts, who adjusts to change rather than guides it."[50] The prevalence and strength of this theme grew as the crisis lengthened, and the failure of the aborted rescue mission was followed by rapid growth in the appearance of this fantasy.

A closely allied fantasy that the Carter persona was politically motivated chained out as the captivity went on and the presidential campaign heated up. He was using the hostages to improve his chances of reelection. Without comment, *Time* reported that Carter "last week again raised, as he had on the morn of the Wisconsin and Kansas primaries, false hopes about . . . the fate of the hostages."[51] Although it waited until after the election was over, *Newsweek* then reported that "a minority" in the Carter State Department shared the view that the "impact of the primary campaign on our policy was crucial."[52] The *Times* and *Post* shared more and stronger fantasies of selfish motives in the Carter persona's decision making, particularly after the failed rescue mission.

These fantasies of weakness and political motivation were part of a new rhetorical vision that predominated late in the hostage captivity. This vision was consistent with the still-shared earlier one in every significant way other than the depiction of the Carter persona.

Regardless of their views of the Carter persona's restraint, competence, and political motivations, the sources unanimously shared fantasies that he was a humanitarian deeply concerned about the hostages. The Carter persona's decision to admit the Shah to the United States for medical treatment, then, was a "humanitarian gesture" taken because he "did not subscribe to the argument" of less humanitarian men that the "52 lives have to be weighed coldly against broader interests of the U.S."[53] As a Christian and humanitarian, he felt a "deep sense of personal responsibility for getting those people out," and admittedly felt "personally accountable for those 52 lives."[54] He called the day of the hostages' release "the happiest day of my life."[55]

Other Characters

Other characters played roles in the drama. The roles played by these bit players were not insignificant, and they are omitted from this analysis only because of space constraints. These bit players played roles consistent with and supportive of the major characters, the settings in which the drama took place, and the actions of the characters.

Perhaps the best example of this consistency was the fact that U.S. negotiator Warren Christopher was the primary agent credited with securing the hostages' release. He played this role for those sharing the vision in which the Carter persona was incompetent and unworthy of wearing the hero's mantle. In fact, the sources most condemning of the Carter persona's competence had the most to say about the competence of the Christopher persona. Christopher's "remarkable bargaining" for the hostages made him "America's 53rd hero," and demonstrated his skills. Christopher was "cool and collected," "organized and prepared," and had a "knack for winning concessions." Christopher had the "tact of a true diplomat, the tactical skills of a great soldier, the analytical ability of a fine lawyer, and the selfless dedication of a citizen-statesman."[56]

Action Themes

The major plot actions in the drama were consistent with the characters taking them. Both sets of fantasies were consistent with the settings in which the personae enacted the plotline. The drama itself was a tragedy, and the major actions were the seizure, the Iranians' bargaining, the humiliating crisis, U.S. policy and bargaining, the rescue mission, and the "Reagan threat." Minor actions also were included in the drama, but are not analyzed in this study. The plot of the Iranian drama showed more than "an element of tragedy."[57] The "tragedy of the American captives in Iran," was the "tragedy of Iran" and of "the civilized world."[58] As in the literary tragedy, the hero (Jimmy Carter) was "inexorably marching to a disaster with the best intentions."[59]

The Seizure Itself

The most significant action in the drama was the seizure of the hostages. The seizure was wrong in every conceivable way--it was criminal, widely condemned, a violation of Islam, an act of war, cruel to the hostages, and without any conceivable justification. All four sources carried Carter's characterization of the seizure as "international terrorism, . . . blackmail . . . outside the bounds of international law and diplomatic tradition."[60]

The seizure was an "illegality," a violation of "the rights of the people of the Unites States and . . . the world community," that was "totally inconsistent with the rule of law."[61] An international law expert called the seizure a "gross violation of all norms of international law."[62] This very persistent fantasy of illegality was summarized in the report that the seizure "violated international conventions, the U.N. charter, a treaty with the United States and general international law, according to a State Department study."[63]

This criminal action received the widespread condemnation it deserved. "The world" was reported to be "on our side," as the seizure "brought largely negative reaction from officials and newspapers around the world."[64] Condemnation came from governments and international bodies--including "the Soviet Union and a number of African nations."[65] The American government relied on condemnations by the U.N. Security Council and World Court to show the illegality and worldwide condemnation of Iran, and the media shared these, as well as condemnations by American allies, the Pope, and many individual

nations. *Newsweek* reported that "the U.N. Security Council called on Iran 'in the strongest terms'" to free the hostages, and that the World Court "ordered Iran to release the 53 American hostages and to pay damages . . . for 'successive and still continuing breaches' of international law."[66]

The seizure also violated the Khomeini persona's own Islamic law. Illegality and hypocrisy were appropriate for the spiritually bankrupt Khomeini persona. The seizure "violated Islamic morality and charity," and was a "wrong that offends . . . the precepts of Islam."[67] Sadat asserted that "what is happening in Iran is a crime against Islam."[68]

When the militant personae seized the hostages--with the implicit approval of Iran's government--they committed "an act of war against the United States," and the U.S. should "regard it as an act of war" and "treat it as an act of war."[69] Since international agreements treat embassies as sovereign territory of their owning nation, "when one nation deliberately infringes on the sovereignty of another, . . . that is by definition an act of war."[70]

The act-of-war fantasy justified any number of U.S. actions. The attempted rescue mission was justified because Iran "had long since, in effect, declared war on the United States by its impermissible act."[71] As an act of war, the seizure put America "de facto, at war with Iran," and, therefore, the seizure "should be answered by . . . another act of war."[72]

The seizure also was wrong because of its cruelty and lack of justification. The cruelty involved "unconscionable" acts that made the captivity an "ordeal."[73] The hostages were "verbally abused and psychologically harassed with threats of death," and subjected to "physical and mental abuse," "death threats," "wormy food and months in solitary," and other cruelties.[74]

The "ordeal of physical and psychological abuse" was a "tale of horror," and the "physical and mental torture" endured by the hostages was comparable "to that which some of our boys got from the North Vietnamese."[75] This fantasy of cruelty to the hostages was one of the most common and most persistent in the drama. Besides cataloguing the above cruelties, the media reported Carter's anger at Iran's use of "quasi-brainwashing techniques" and "harsh brainwashing methods" that were "the work of experienced professionals" and were "in many ways a more insidious form than we saw in Korea and Vietnam."[76]

Complementing these fantasies of extreme cruelty to a few were other fantasies depicting the seizure as cruel to larger numbers of people. The seizure was cruel to Jimmy Carter, the families of the captives, and all Americans. "It was not just those in the embassy . . . who were captive. It was, as they said night after night on television, 'America Held Hostage.'"[77]

Refuting the possibility that the action of the Iranians might be justified by their ends or defense of some principle(s), the media denied the validity of the ends and argued that no principles justified the Iranian actions. The Iranians asserted the seizure was merely the shutting down of a "nest of spies." Even if this were true, the seizure would be unjustified because "all major countries do have intelligence agency personnel that work out of their embassies. It is a worldwide practice, as the Iranians know." Besides, when embassy personnel are suspected of espionage, "the normal procedure is to declare them *persona non grata* (unwelcome) and order them to leave the country."[78] More succinctly, "nothing that may conceivably have happened within the walls of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran could confer a right on the Iranians to disregard the diplomatic immunity of that embassy and its personnel."[79]

Iran's claims to be acting on principles were refuted. A letter writer asked why, if Iran believed in the principle that exiled former rulers should be returned for trial in their former nations, "we have heard no messages of support" from Iran for Uganda's demand that Libya return former Ugandan leader Idi Amin for trial.[80] The Iranians were "less interested in justice being done than in extorting all they possibly can" from the U.S.[81] After the lengthy negotiations prompted by Iran's 24-billion-dollar ransom demand, "none of the Ayatollah's proclaimed ideals survived" months of "haggling over gold."[82]

Besides greed, Iran's motives for the seizure were revenge and political gain. Rather than citing examples of this fantasy, readers are reminded that the Khomeini persona was portrayed as a vengeful political opportunist. Appropriately, then, several fantasies specifically portrayed the seizure as motivated by revenge and political ambition.

The other major actions of the Iranians involved their bargaining over the release of the hostages. These actions were characterized by broken promises, changing terms, absurd demands, and other frustrating behaviors. These behaviors were consistent with the themes of Iranians as liars, hypocrites, criminals, and inept leaders.

Iranian Negotiating

"Time and again the administration of President Bani-Sadr did not deliver on its commitments."[83] The *Post* reported "previous broken promises on other deals," and *Time* referred to "many previous promises from Tehran that have not been honored."[84] Besides breaking promises, "various Iranian authorities kept changing the terms of the bargaining."[85] Negotiations were difficult "because the conditions are constantly being changed in Teheran" and "conflicting signals" made it hard to "determine what the position of the Iranian leaders is."[86]

Iran's "patently absurd" $24 billion ransom demand "smacked of extortion," and it "stupefied" U.S. negotiators.[87] The absurdity of the demand was clarified by the report that the ransom could purchase "twelve nuclear-powered aircraft carriers, or 20 Trident nuclear submarines, or 1,714 F-15 jet-fighter aircraft, . . . or . . . 184,615 city buses."[88]

The frustrating nature of the Iranians' bargaining behavior is clarified in Hoppe's editorial *cum* fairy tale which contains this vignette involving Carter and Iranian President Banisadr:

> "Apologize for what?" [Carter asked] "It doesn't matter," said the President [Banisadr], "as long as you apologize. You might apologize for not apologizing. Meanwhile, if you promise not to say anything mean, we will (a) take the chips [hostages] away from the knaves [militants] and give them to the Ayatollah or (b) take the Knaves away from the chips or (c) both or (d) none of the above." "Over our dead bodies!" shouted one of the Knaves. "Not until you give us back the Shah you don't have!" yelled another. "On the other hand . . . " said a third.[89]

Humiliation of the United States

The entire episode involving the hostages' detention was characterized--in a sustained and powerful fantasy--as a humiliation to the U.S. The seizure "was feeding" the "growing feeling" that the U.S. was "taking a beating in the world."[90] Khomeini was "making a fool out of the United States," as the U.S. was seen being forced to "grovel at the feet of a petty tyrant," and the U.S. looked "ridiculous in the eyes of the world."[91]

The majority of these fantasies used the word "humiliation." The seizure was "Washington's humiliation," "the humiliation," "a national humiliation," "the Ayatollah's humiliating defiance," "this nation's latest humiliation," "this latest bit of humiliation for the United States," "the humiliation of American honor," "the national humiliation," "our national humiliation," etc.[92]

American Actions Justified

In contrast to the illegal and undesirable Iranian actions, U.S. actions were sanctioned by the rightness of the American cause, the need to preserve America, the moral and other principles underlying U.S. actions, and by God. The U.S. would prevail in Iran "because we are right" and because of "the rightness of our position."[93] Part of America's "rightness" stemmed from the fantasy that ending the humiliation was essential to preserving America--an *a priori* good.

This rightness allowed the U.S. to respond to Iran's economic threats so as to "eliminate any suggestion that economic pressures can weaken our stand on basic issues of principle."[94] In fact, with "principles at risk," the U.S. had to convince "Khomeini and his people . . . that nothing will move the United States from its basic principles in this affair."[95] The U.S. was "keeping alive the principles of decency and freedom," and of "humanity," among others.[96]

U.S. actions were controlled by moral and ethical principles as well. The statuses of the Shah and the hostages were separate issues because "the two are not morally connected."[97] The Iranians were "moral jujitsu artists, who compensate for their puniness by turning our ethical strength against us."[98] The Carter persona's "concern over morals [was] more than just rhetoric," and his attempted military rescue of the hostages was "morally upright."[99]

Rightness, national preservation, principles, and morality are fine underpinnings for policy, but God is the ultimate sanctioning agent. The print media were full of references to the Christian God. A service held in the National Cathedral for the hostages featured the lyric, "Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord," while one hostage appeared on an Iranian-produced tape at Christmas time singing "Be near me Lord Jesus . . . Bless all the dear children in thy tender care--and take us to Heaven to live with thee there."[100] Carter sang, "Faith of our fathers, living still . . . in spite of dungeon fire and sword," before bowing and listening to the words, "Out of the depths I have cried to you, O Lord, hear my prayer."[101]

Further, Carter himself "prayed for the release of the hostages," and later attended with "2,000 others an ecumenical prayer service" for the hostages.[102] The Governor of Minnesota "called for . . . a day of prayer in Minnesota's churches," while a Chicago minister vowed a prayer vigil would begin Sunday and "continue until all the hostages are freed."[103] "In communities as diverse as the Cleveland suburb of Euclid, Omaha, Neb., and Washington, D.C., Americans prayed for a peaceful solution to the crisis."[104]

Fantasies of divine involvement continued throughout the captivity, and came to be used to explain the safe release of the hostages. French air traffic controllers radioed the hostages' home-bound plane, "We praise the Lord for your return."[105] As one hostage stepped off the plane in Algiers, her sister exclaimed, "praise the Lord," then rushed to her church to replace a banner reading, "It's Time to Pray. Release the Hostages," with one reading, "Prayer Works."[106] New Jersey's governor issued a proclamation upon the hostages' release urging "all of the citizens of New Jersey to join in prayers of thanks."[107]

U.S. Policy Toward Iran

The main characteristic of U.S. policy toward Iran, appropriately, was that of the Carter persona--restraint. This was proper, for "restraint and caution [were] called for," in a situation providing "no choice but to proceed with extreme caution."[108] Hence, "a course of restraint" was the "only sensible strategy."[109]

Although U.S. policy was designed to provide a peaceful resolution, the U.S. did not rule out the "military option." The Carter persona "was not about to rule out resorting to arms," even after the failure of the military rescue mission.[110] He even told the Soviets the U.S. would not "rule out the use of military force."[111] At various times the U.S. was said to be considering various forms of military action under various contingencies, often supporting the threats with military exercises, warship deployments, and open discussions of the feasibility of the plans. Media readers also were assured military action would be legitimate under Article 51 of the U.N. Charter "in order to vindicate an international law principle."[112]

Those holding to the Carter-as-competent-leader fantasy also shared fantasies that U.S. sanctions against Iran, while restrained and nonprovocative, "amounted to political, economic, and psychological warfare," and therefore "struck back hard."[113] The sanctions were a "series of dramatic but carefully limited moves."[114]

As time went on, fantasies of "firmness with restraint" were shared less often, indicating fewer people were sharing the Carter-as-competent-leader vision, and more people were sharing the vision in which U.S. policy toward Iran was not aggressive enough. The sources came to be full of references to "appeasement," "groveling," "servility," "bootlicking," and "pussy-footing."[115] In this vision, since "the five months of extraordinary public restraint and official apologies" had not resolved the crisis, it was time to "let Iran . . . begin to worry about a less compliant side of the American character."[116] Sharers of this vision advised specific tougher actions, ranging from a food boycott, to cutting off Iranian shipping, to military action.

U.S. Rescue Mission

One of the competing rhetorical visions saw Carter as strong and capable while the other saw him as lacking strength and leadership. Following the failed U.S. military rescue mission, fewer of the former fantasies were found, and more of the latter were found. The failed mission was "a new American tragedy," that "humiliate[d] the U.S."[117] In one reporter's eyes, "above all, there is the embarrassment. . . . The failure made the country look like amateurs to the world."[118] The world was "having a good laugh" at America's "military slapstick comedy routine," while Americans were left to "gloomily sift the rubble of their hopes and the nation's self-respect."[119]

The rescue mission was a turning point--"the moment at which the electorate, almost subliminally, began to harden in the view that Carter was hopeless."[120] Even some of Carter's "best friends" had called the mission "a senseless operation, wrecked by bad judgment."[121]

Those clinging to the Carter-as-competent-leader vision, however, still shared fantasies that the mission was justified. It was justified because it was worth the risk, because bad luck caused its failure, because conditions in Iran necessitated it, because it had a good chance of success, because it proved U.S. resolve to see a release, and because critics would have applauded it if it had worked. The relative unpopularity of these attempts to justify the mission reflects the unpopularity of the competent-Carter vision after the mission.

U.S. Negotiating

In contrast to the Iranians' erratic and outrageous behavior, American negotiating involved intense diplomatic efforts by a crack team of specialists who "worked until dawn," doubtless "going over every grim detail of the situation," in conjunction with a "special working group in the State Department's operations center that is staffed around the clock" and that included a conference table, "maps, a blackboard, source materials and files of the latest relevant information."[122] U.S. negotiators made "tireless efforts" to establish "a businesslike way of working with" Iran, and "stretch[ed] to the legal limits--and possibly beyond," so that the hostages' release was "made possible by the patience and persistence" of U.S. negotiators.[123]

The "Reagan Threat"

Those sharing the weak Carter vision could not give him credit for the release. Persons perceiving the Carter persona as weak saw Iran's release of the hostages as resulting from the "Reagan threat." In this rhetorical vision, Iran's fear of dealing with the stronger Reagan persona motivated the hostages' release.

The Carter persona used this threat by making a last offer and giving Iran "two weeks to take it or leave it. Failing that, he said, Iran could wait out the Inauguration a few days later--then deal with Ronald Reagan." As Carter's term "trickl[ed] away," so did Iran's "best chance to close a deal."[124] Reagan's inauguration, then, was a deadline in that it represented "the onset of an Administration prepared to retaliate" against Iran.[125] And, Iran "signaled unmistakably that it preferred not to become Ronald Reagan's first political crisis--or target of opportunity."[126]

Summary

Action themes predominated in print media depictions of the events in Iran. Characters were defined by their actions, and settings were defined by actions taking place there. Besides the actions discussed, themes were shared regarding Iran's public statements, causes of the seizure, the U.S. admission of the Shah, the impossibility and readiness of U.S. military responses, the settlement, and the actions the U.S. needed to take based on the "lessons" of the hostage affair.

Setting Themes

The characters and actions in a coherent rhetorical vision must act and take place in settings consistent with their nature. This was true of the Iranian hostage drama, which took place in Iran, the United States, and the world. The sources displayed great consistency in sharing fantasies regarding the settings.

Iran

Iran was a place where irrationality and "surrealism reign[ed]," so that Iranians were living in a kind of never-never land."[127] In Iran even the laws of causation did not apply, and "anything could happen."[128] "Fanaticism obviously" ruled in Iran and events there "defied any rational process of cause and effect."[129] The State Department shared inside jokes about what was called "the 'Farsi factor,' a wan sense that in Iran, just about anything could happen."[130]

Beyond being simply bizarre and different, Iran was a primitive place. A released hostage reported that "when we got off the plane, we set our watches ahead 2,000 years."[131] The Khomeini persona's revolution was aimed "at creating, toward the end of the 20th century, a modern version of his ideal 7th century state."[132] Iran revealed its primitive nature in street executions of prostitutes and drug dealers, stonings of sex criminals and adulterers, poor medical care, poor electrical and telephone service, etc. *Time* cited this example of the sacred ground (U.S.) being contrasted with the profane ground of Iran:

> In New York City, at the close of an Iranian student demonstration a Columbia University undergraduate shouted: "We're gonna ship you back and you aren't gonna like it! No more rock music. No more television. No more sex. You're gonna get on that plane at Kennedy, and when you get off in Tehran, you're gonna be back in the 13th century. How you gonna like that? The Iranians, who stared glumly, did not respond.[133]

No American would want to return to such a place, and the Iranians' reported lack of response implies they were less than excited at the prospect.

Consistent with fantasies depicting the Khomeini persona and his fellow leaders as incompetent and immoral were fantasies depicting Iran as poorly governed, possessed of a poor legal system, and on

the verge of collapse from these weaknesses and other threats. In Iran's government, "confusion often reigns," giving Iran a "flair for trouble."[134] Its leaders were "capable of doing just about anything," and proved their incompetence by inflicting "their deepest wounds upon themselves."[135] The difficulty of negotiating with Iran was the difficulty of dealing with a "non-government."[136]

The inadequacy of Iran's legal system was evident in reports it was "guilty of cruelty, injustice, and denial of civil rights to its citizens."[137] In Iran, "even the most rudimentary mechanisms of justice" had collapsed, so that "wherever in the world people still fairly judge human conduct, the contrast between our system of justice and Khomeini-style anarchy will be inescapable."[138] Iran had executed twenty by firing squad in a two-day period, executed persons for sex crimes and for organizing religious centers for the Bahai faith, tried the Shah *in absentia* and sentenced him to dismemberment, left hanged persons on the gallows for hours, randomly arrested Americans, and threatened to execute prisoners associated with terrorists who seized an Iranian embassy. The explicit and implicit contrasting of Iranian and American law indicates the rhetorical power of fantasies contrasting the sacred and profane grounds on which a drama is enacted.

Iran was a "disintegrating society."[139] Khomeini was "incapable of creating a government with a strong chance of surviving him," and his regime was going to "fall apart from its own excesses."[140] Five days after the seizure there was a "grave danger" Iran would "disintegrate," while six weeks later "it [was] only a matter of time" before collapse, while six months later "the inevitable collapse" of Iran was predicted, and twelve months later Iran was going to "collapse before long."[141] This was consistent with the fantasies that the Khomeini persona was dying. The instability theme was as persistent and as inconsistent with subsequent reality as the theme that Khomeini was dying. These themes together provided hope the crisis would resolve itself, hence limiting the growing unpleasantness produced by the reduced hopes of a happy resolution that stemmed from the lengthening of the hostage crisis drama.

The danger of collapse arose from internal chaos and external threats. A "multitude of devils swarm in the bottle that the Ayatollah has recklessly uncorked."[142] Among the internal problems faced by Iran were: "the Kurds, the Baluchis, and others want autonomy; other ayatollahs vie for prominence; segments of the military must be thinking of the next government."[143] By July 1980 Iran was "in deeper turmoil than ever. The economy was in a shambles, the government and . . . Parliament drifted rudderless and Islamic militants were locked with moderates and leftists in a bitter struggle for power."[144] The complexity of these internal threats and the internecine warfare between factions were the subject of huge numbers of fantasies throughout the drama. These fantasies were consistent with those depicting Khomeini's persona and motives as personal and political, offered hope that the seizure might end on its own, and provided Americans hope the hated Iranians soon might be stewing in their own juices.

Internal chaos threatened Iran, but so did Soviet machinations and war with Iraq. The Soviets were plotting internal subversion and/or external invasion, varying with the source sharing the fantasy and when it was shared. Whether the threat was Soviet or Iraqi, Iran's military--hurt by the lack of American spare parts and other problems--would prove "ineffective against a major military opponent."[145] This fantasy, too, provided hope the seizure would resolve itself and/or that the Iranians would pay for what they had done.

The United States

Unlike the factionalized and legally chaotic profane ground, the U.S., as sacred ground, was characterized by unity and by being a land of laws. The American people had been "galvanized . . . toward unity" by the Iranian seizure of hostages, and the Carter persona made it official by signing a Congressional resolution declaring "'national unity day' in support of the hostages in Iran."[146] Anti-Iranian feelings were "growing throughout the nation," and "a new feeling of patriotism" prevailed in an America "unified in its indignation."[147]

These fantasies of national unity and patriotism were consistent with those used in Reagan's successful presidential campaign. The two sets of fantasies are brought together in this description:

> [Reagan stood], looking down over a vista of white monuments to Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln agleam in the warming sunlight. He had placed his hand on a crumbling family Bible and been sworn as the 40th President of the United States, to the thud-thudding of howitzers and the swell of patriotic hymns. And now, with his predecessor sitting by in defeat, it was his turn to summon the nation to believe once again in itself and its capacity for great deeds. "And after all," said Ronald Reagan, his voice thick with

> emotion, "why shouldn't we believe that? We are Americans." It was Day 444 and Day One come together in rare historic symmetry--the end of the long ordeal of the hostages in Iran and the beginning of what Reagan promised could be "an era of national renewal." But a hostage nation found its own release in a day impossibly full of catch-in-the-throat television tableaus--of the ritual passage of power to a new President; of Citizen Carter standing hatless and hollow-eyed in a drizzle to announce that the 52 "were prisoners no more"; of the first hostages descending in blinky disbelief into a dank rain and freedom.[148]

The U.S. setting also was characterized by respect for and adherence to law. These fantasies contrasted the sacred and the profane ground and justified aspects of American policy toward Iran before and after the seizure. For example, the U.S. could not return the Shah to Iran because laws prohibit such extradition in the absence of a treaty, and there was "no legal way for the U.S." to turn him over--"even if it wished to."[149] Unstated was the assumption that, in the U.S. setting, law would prevail over circumstances.

The U.S. followed the law in all of its actions. Legally, the President lacked the power to meet various Iranian demands. At one point, the Carter persona responded to an Iranian proposal with "several hundred pages explaining why American law made full compliance impossible."[150] In its policy toward Iran, U.S. "lawyers and diplomats . . . followed international legal procedures to seek freedom" for the hostages.[151] When the Carter persona proposed to deport Iranian students in the U.S., he promised the deportations would be "undertaken in accordance with constitutional due process requirements."[152] The U.S. suspended the deportations when a court found them unconstitutional, resuming them only after a court ruled they were "a legitimate exercise" of presidential power.[153]

This compliance with law and legality--despite the popularity and potential effectiveness of extra- or il-legal options--contrasted the sacred ground of America with the profane ground of Iran. Americans, after all, could have responded to the seizure "by making hostages of 250,000 or so Iranians in this country. It did no such thing, of course."[154] In fact, when the Federal Bureau of Investigation received a tip that some Americans planned to hold fifty Iranians for execution in retaliation for any deaths of American hostages, the FBI "immediately notified all of [its] divisions" to act accordingly.[155]

While Iran was a nation ruled by *men* [*sic*], the U.S. was a nation of persons ruled by *laws*. Virtually every U.S. action was justified, required, or prohibited by law or legal principle. These fantasies, and those of Iranian actions as illegal, persisted throughout the seizure.

The World

The larger setting incorporating Iran and the U.S. was the world setting. This world contained a ubiquitous Soviet threat to American security, constant security threats to Western oil supplies, and forces of chaos that threatened the old world order dominated but stabilized by omnipotent superpowers.

There was a Soviet threat to Iran that was part of Iran's internal chaos and state of near-collapse. The U.S. was advised to respond to Iran mindful of the "Soviet reach for the oil lifeline of the West."[156] After all, the Soviets had "dreamed since the days of the czars of warm-water ports in the Persian Gulf."[157] The Soviets had an ominous "military presence on Iran's borders," and were practicing "subversion, espionage, and propaganda" against Iran in order to "raise to power the most radical political interests in Iran."[158]

One of the major threats posed by the Soviets--and by other actors and eventualities--was the loss of Western oil supplies. The oil supplies could be threatened by everything from Islamic fundamentalism run amok, to a wave of anti-Americanism, to "Soviet control of the Iranian oil spigot."[159]

The world setting as a whole was suffering from decreasing orderliness and increasing chaos. The hostage affair was a symptom, example, or harbinger of a new more chaotic world "increasingly out of our control."[160]

In one version, Iran was an example of disorder that preceded and would survive the seizure. After all, "in this mad world, who knows what other country's embassy will be similarly invaded or when?"[161] Washington was a "troubled city . . . leading a life of pretense. . . . because of a growing conviction that it is dealing with a world . . . that is out of control."[162]

In a second version, Iran was a catalyst or cause of greater disorder. The Iran episode had "squandered" the world's already "few means to survive," leaving "not much" to go on.[163] The order

being lost was one based on the strength of superpowers.

In a third version, Iran was a harbinger of disorder to come, and raised the question of whether the world was "heading . . . toward a series of disorderly upheavals beyond the capacity of the superpowers to restrain," as the superpowers began "choking periodically" on the realization that "great powers are not what they used to be. What they have lost is the military power to command the obedience of distant people."[164]

Among sharers of the incompetent Carter persona vision, the fantasy that the world was falling apart contained a world in which, "since the fall of Vietnam, American stature has declined almost everywhere in the world," and "declined sharply."[165] The U.S. was going to "keep on slipping in the world," due to this "last straw in a series of humiliating defeats," and Americans longed for the time "not too long ago" when enemies "dared not harm" American citizens "for fear of swift and sure retribution."[166] This world featured a zero-sum power game in which any loss in American prestige or power either was the result or cause of an increase in "Soviet leverage."[167]

Conclusions

This analysis has revealed the rhetorical nature of print journalism's coverage of the Iran hostage "crisis." That journalism is communication and often political seems noncontroversial, but the political importance of its coverage is apparent only when one understands its persuasive nature. This analysis has revealed and explained its persuasive nature.

Communication is persuasive whenever it shapes or creates "reality" for those using it. Rhetorical visions are coherent views of reality for their sharers, and they may persuade others to share them, and this study has revealed two coherent rhetorical visions in the coverage of Iran.

Besides revealing the persuasive nature of communication phenomena not traditionally considered persuasive, fantasy-theme analysis is useful in that it shows how communication both reveals and shapes the motives of social actors who share rhetorical visions. In the case of Iran, several conclusions can be drawn about social actors' motives.

Journalists were motivated to provide the hostage incident with monumental coverage for reasons apparent in the coverage itself. Journalists are motivated to cover any event(s) considered "newsworthy." The criteria for newsworthiness require that an event be *timely, unique, involve adventure or entertainment, and somehow affect the lives of those to whom it is reported.*[168] The rhetorical visions themselves defined the events in Iran as newsworthy. The events in Iran were *timely* by virtue of their occurrence in the present tense and by the constantly changing state of affairs depicted in the fantasies of chaos and factionalism in Iran. The *uniqueness* of the crisis was announced by themes depicting Iran as a bizarre setting, and by themes depicting it as a watershed moment in a troubled world's history.

The *entertainment value* of a hostage episode is unquestionable--the lives of Americans were on the line daily for 444 days in this one. Further, fantasies depicted Iran as part of a threatened world order and as part of U.S. defense of principles necessary to the survival of America itself. As the "crisis" became an unspoken presidential campaign issue, the game's stakes and its entertainment value increased. And, Reagan's climactic inaugural promise of an era of national renewal provided a happy ending.

The *effect of the seizure on Americans* also was depicted in the visions. The seizure was a test of Carter's ability to lead, a barometer of America's international prestige, a national and personal humiliation to America and all Americans, and central to the future of world peace and order.

The motives of readers in attending and reacting to Iran are apparent in the visions as well.[169] First was the motive to preserve America as the American place it had always been--a law-abiding world power. Iran and related events not only threatened America's survival, but also provided a negative illustration of what happens to nations where the rule of law is not practiced. This motive was an important one, and tied closely to another.

This related motive was the desire of Americans to preserve their self-images as Americans. Americans are proud and special *personae* who do not accept humiliations like the seizure and the failed rescue mission, especially on top of several humiliations since Vietnam. Humiliation is rejection of self, and preservation of self-image is a strong motive producing, among other things, very strong resistance to attitude change. Threats to self produce ego-involvement, which limits persons' willingness to change attitudes in the direction producing the threat. It does so either through contrasting or by motivating threatened persons to generate counter-arguments.[170]

Americans' frequent participation in patriotic traditions and activities assures they will be ego-involved whenever America or Americans are discussed. Americans reacted negatively to anti-American statements by counter-arguing and contrasting in the form of negative fantasy themes about Iranian actors and actions. They also were very responsive to pro-American sentiments like those expressed in Reagan's successful flag-waving campaign. Reagan's victory and the popularity of pro-American and anti-Iranian fantasies, then, can be explained by the ego-threatening nature of the "humiliation" fantasies in the vision.

Americans doubtless had other motives for attending to coverage of the events in Iran. For example, once God was made the sanctioning agent for American policy, American success eventually had to result in order to keep the vision consistent with reality.

In addition, Americans were motivated to some degree by their fear of growing Soviet adventurism (remember Afghanistan), growing Third-world nationalism, and other threats to the relatively secure and orderly world previously provided by balanced superpower hegemony. Fear can be a great motivator of action in the presence of a simple and concrete solution.[171] Reagan offered people an alternative that was easy to understand, simple to execute, and promised to work. To feel safe again voters need only vote for Reagan, an action already highly desirable for its capacity to restore humiliated American pride.

The importance of the print journalism in this case was its influence on the Presidential election. The predominance of the weak-Carter-persona vision for months before the election, and the similarities between Reagan's campaign rhetoric and this vision, are not likely mere coincidence. Reagan and journalists saw the Iranian affair as a humiliating affront to national pride requiring stronger future leadership and a renewal of patriotism.

Since Reagan won by a major landslide over an incumbent President--a rare occurrence in American presidential politics--the likelihood of these being a coincidence seems remote. The rhetorical visions motivated Americans to vote for anyone who promised to restore their pride in self and country, to reduce their fear of world chaos, and who agreed that God promised eventual American victory in any situation. Reagan met all three criteria.

One significant implication of this study, then, is the suggestion that American electoral behavior is affected by perceptions that the mythical national pride of the U.S. has been humiliated. If Reagan's appeal came from the perception that he would end such humiliation, we might speculate that such an appeal would recur under similar electoral and world conditions. This hypothesis merits future investigation. And, since the hypothesis weakens the already tenuous assumption of voter rationality, such future study seems warranted.

Polling data are consistent with the suggested bases for Reagan's appeal and the rhetorical visions found in this study. Carter's overall approval rating, which had been in the range of 28-33% for six months prior to the hostages' captivity, climbed to 38% two weeks after the November 4 seizure, to 51% by the end of November, and to 61% by the first week of December.[172] This is consistent with the oft-made observation that Americans rally to their president in times of crisis, and with the predominant early rhetorical vision portraying Carter as restrained but competent.

Carter's approval rating dropped as precipitously. Approval of his presidency dropped to 55% in February, 39% in March, 31% in June, and 21% in July.[173] Approval of his handling of the hostage affair dropped from 66% in December to 33% in April, and disapproval rose in the same period from 32% to 65%. Those calling his policies toward Iran a success fell from 51% in January to 21% in April.[174] These polls are consistent with the late-crisis predominace of the Carter-as-weak-persona vision. The present study and the polls are both consistent with Cherwitz and Zagacki's conclusion that Americans have limited patience for rhetorical solutions by presidents when military and other measures are unused.[175]

The preference for Reagan over Carter also is consistent with the polls and this study's findings. In October 1980, 42% of the respondents believed Reagan would do a better job of increasing respect for America abroad, while only 31% thought Carter would do so.[176] This appears to be consistent with support of Reagan by people who felt the hostage crisis humiliated the U.S. and that Carter was at fault for not alleviating the humiliation. Americans seemed to feel that violence was a good way to alleviate humiliation. A December 1980 poll showed 30% thought Reagan "very likely" to use military force against Iran, and 33% thought him "fairly likely" to do so.[177]

Americans, then, suffering from a perceived national humiliation, rejected a leader who did not act decisively and successfully. Further, they were

willing to vote for a leader who seemed likely to act militarily and to restore respect for America overseas. Some evidence that this tendency to strike back is a general one and that Iran was not an isolated case can be found in the example of Reagan's bombing of Libya. A poll found that 71% of Americans favored the bombing of Libya in retaliation for alleged acts of terrorism.[178] This strong support for the bombing is indicative of a strong desire for retribution because the same poll revealed that only 31% felt the raid would decrease terrorism. 23% felt it would have no effect, and 39% felt it actually would increase terrorism.[179]

This study, then, suggests that popular print media do more than objectively report reality. Rather, they may exert a great influence on, as well as accurately reflect, American attitudes relevant to making important political decisions. Hence, this analysis reveals that rhetorical and communication scholars may play an important role in determining how communications not consciously rhetorical may influence political agendas and climates.

Endnotes

[1] "Blackmailing the U.S.," *Time*, 19 November 1979, 14; "A Helpless Giant in Iran," *Newsweek*, 19 November 1979, 61.

[2] "U.S. vs. Iran: Calm But Tough," *Newsweek*, 26 November 1979, 34; "Iran: The Test of Wills," *Time*, 26 November 1979, 22.

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[5] Thomas O. Sloan et al., "Report of the Committee on the Advancement and Refinement of Rhetorical Criticism," in Lloyd F. Bitzer and Edwin Black, eds., *The Prospect of Rhetoric* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1971), 3.

[6] See, for example, Ernest G. Bormann, "Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision: The Rhetorical Criticism of Social Reality," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 58 (1972): 396-407; "Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision: Ten Years Later," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 68 (1982): 288-305; "Symbolic Convergence Theory: A Communication Formulation," *Journal of Communication*, 35 (1985): 128-38.

[7] See, for example, Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckman, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise on the Sociology of Knowledge* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1966); Robert L. Scott, "On Viewing Rhetoric as Epistemic," *Central States Speech Journal* 18 (1967): 9-17; Robert L. Scott, "On Viewing Rhetoric as Epistemic: Ten Years Later," *Central States Speech Journal* 27 (1976): 258-66.

[8] Bormann, "The Rhetorical Criticism of Social Reality," 398.

[9] Donald C. Shields, "A Dramatistic Approach to Applied Communication Research: Theory, Methods, and Applications," in John F. Cragan and Donald C. Shields, eds. *Applied Communication Research: A Dramatistic Approach* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland, 1981), 6-7.

[10] Bormann, "Rhetorical Criticism of Social Reality," 400, 406.

[11] Shields, p. 7.

[12] Applications by Bormann include, "The Eagleton Affair: A Fantasy Theme Analysis," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 59 (1973): 143-59; "A Fantasy Theme Analysis of the Television Coverage of the Hostage Release and the Reagan Inaugural," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 68 (1982): 288-305; "Fetching Good Out of Evil: A Rhetorical Use of Calamity," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 63 (1977): 130-39. A bibliography of Bormannean studies is found in Cragan and Shields, *Applied Communication Research*, 420-21. More studies have since been published.

[13] Cragan and Shields, 6.

[14] "Portrait of an Ascetic Despot," *Time*, 7 Jan. 1980, 22, 25.

[15] Georgie Anne Geyer, "Who is Khomeini? What's Behind His Awesome Power?" *Denver Post*, 2 December 1979, sec. A, 25.

[16] "Iran: The Test of Wills," 20; Geyer 25.

[17] "Bani-Sadr Expands Power, Denounces Militants Again," *Denver Post*, 8 February 1980, sec. A, 1; "Banisadr's Jolting Defeat," *Time*, 24 March 1980, 30; James Reston, "Some Hope for the Hostages," *New York Times*, 14 March 1980, sec. A, 27.

[18] "After 300 Days, Hope Only a 4-Letter Dream," *Denver Post*, 29 August 1980, sec. A, 1.

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[23] "Iranian is Expelled; Proceedings Go On," *Denver Post*, 2 December 1979, sec. A, 7.

[24] "SAVAK Gone, SAVAMA In," *Denver Post*, 7 June 1980, sec. A, 1; Pat Oliphant, Cartoon, *Denver Post*, 6 May 1980, sec. B, 17.

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[26] Geyer, 27; "Let the Shah Stay Here," *Denver Post*, 9 December 1979, sec. P, 32.

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[28] "Peril and Humiliation," *Denver Post*, 7 November 1979, sec. B, 28; "Friendship and the Shah," *New York Times*, 29 July 1980, sec. A, 14.

[29] Mike Keefe, *Denver Post*, 28 November 1979, sec. B, 26; Mike Keefe, *Denver Post*, 25 November 1979, sec A, 31.

[30] Culver, 3.

[31] "Sadat Castigates Khomeini Position of Playing 'God,'" *Denver Post*, 26 December 1979, sec. A, 4; Virginia Springston, Letter, *Denver Post*, 13 November 1979, sec. B, 19; Geyer, 25; M. Wright, Cartoon, *Denver Post*, 26 December 1979, sec. B, 23.

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[33] "Iran: The Test of Wills," 32.

[34] Andrew J. Mair, Letter, *Denver Post*, 7 January 1980, sec. A, 15.

[35] "Other Views," *Denver Post*, 25 January 1981, sec. B, 28.

[36] "The Symbolism of the Siege," *Time*, 26 November 1979, 44.

[37] Mary McGrory, "Time at Hand for Talking to Iran," *Denver Post*, 27 January 1980, sec. B, 23.

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[39] "Iran: The Test of Wills," 23; "The Symbolism of the Siege," 44.

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